3: Clark S-5 (1950) 1951 MH1 Iraq MH1

872 645 embody previous legislation and regulations into the General Education Law of 1940. Under this law it was directed that 'The Ministry of Education shall undertake to create a nation sound in body and mind and character'. So far as primary education was concerned it was provided that it should be free, that the age of admission to the primary school should not be less than six and that the period should be six years. It was also decreed that 'Primary education shall be obligatory and shall be carried out in the districts assigned by the Ministry of Education when [681] necessary facilities are available. Pupils' guardians infringing this Article shall be liable to a fine not exceeding three dinars'.

871 645 By this time the administration of education had been highly systematized and it remains so in the hands of the Ministry of Education centred in Baghdad. A feature of this administration is its very high degree of centralization, with the Ministry of Education controlling and supervising the most minute details both of curricula and expenditure. The Minister of Education himself appears to exercise a greater control of detail than in other countries. Under the Minister primary education is directed by a Director-General of Primary Education. In each of the fourteen provinces of Iraq there is a Provincial Director of Education who is, in reality, the agent of the Ministry of Education, and is in no sense a local official responsible to a local authority.

THE PRESENT POSITION OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION

872 658 Although legal provision for compulsory primary education was made in the General Education Law of 1940, as a reality it does not exist in any part of Iraq. Over the whole of the country out of an estimated total of 750,000 children of primary school age, not more than 175,000 attend primary schools.

Shortly after the passing of the General Education Law of 1940 an attempt was made to apply its compulsory primary education provisions in two of the provinces. Apparently, however, the declaration of compulsory education in these two provinces failed in its object. The main reasons for this failure were the poverty [464] of the majority of the parents who were unable to dispense with the labour of their children on the land, the mobility of part of the population which was still in a semi-nomadic state, and the [362] inability to persuade teachers to live in remote villages where housing facilities and other amenities are most inadequate. It is also stated that, these economic and social reasons apart, other [696] factors such as the unwillingness of the local courts to inflict the legal penalties for non-attendance and the active opposition of